

**REMARKS**

The rejection of Claims 9-12 as being anticipated by Mori et al. under 35 USC §102(b) is deemed overcome by way of the foregoing amendments.

There is no reasonable suggestion in the Mori et al. patent of providing a three way catalyst that is activated by the rich-lean control rendered by the three way catalyst warming means until the catalyst reaches a temperature in the range of 250 °C to 400 °C of activating temperatures. Thereafter, the HC absorbent catalyst warming means starts the air-fuel ratio control when the HC absorbent catalyst is at a temperature within the range of 100 °C to 200 °C and ceases control when the temperature falls within the range 250 °C to 400 °C. Temperatures in this latter range correspond to the temperature of the HC absorbent catalyst in the description phase.

Although the temperature at which the control ceases by the three way catalyst warming means is 250 °C to 400 °C and the starting control temperature by the HC absorbent catalyst warming means is 100 °C to 200 °C, air-fuel ratio control by the HC absorbent catalyst begins after the air-fuel ratio control by the three way catalyst warming means has completed. Because there is a time difference caused from heat conduction due to the three way catalyst being upstream side of the HC absorbent catalyst.

If there are any questions regarding this amendment or the application in general, a telephone call to the undersigned would be appreciated since this should expedite the prosecution of the application for all concerned.

If necessary to effect a timely response, this paper should be considered as a petition for an Extension of Time sufficient to effect a timely response, and please charge any deficiency in fees or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 05-1323 (Docket #056207.51363C1).

Respectfully submitted,

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